

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

120754Z Apr 06

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 002149

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/10/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM TH](#)

SUBJECT: PRIVY COUNCILLOR CONFIRMS - KING DID NOT GIVE
THAKSIN THE BOOT

REF: BANGKOK 02048

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Alex A. Arvizu, reason 1.4 (b) (d)

1. (C) SUMMARY: During a meeting with Ambassador Boyce, Privy Councillor Surayud said that Thaksin had planned since late March to "take a break" immediately after the election. The Privy Councillor confirmed that the King had not encouraged Thaksin to step down. END SUMMARY

2. (C) The Ambassador met on April 11 with Privy Councillor Gen. Surayud Chulanont, one of the most respected political figures in the country. Surayud told the Ambassador that he had heard an account of the April 4 meeting between PM Thaksin and the King directly from the King's principal private secretary, who had been present during the meeting. Because the meeting immediately preceded Thaksin's nationally televised announcement that he would "take a break," many Thais have concluded (or chosen to believe) that the King somehow encouraged Thaksin to step down. In fact, Surayud said, the King said very little in the meeting, beyond noting that the political situation was very tense. Thaksin did most of the talking; when Thaksin told the King he had decided not accept appointment as PM in the next government, the King "only nodded," according to Surayud.

3. (C) Surayud said that the decision to step aside was consistent with a plan Thaksin had formed before the election. During a meeting on March 2, Surayud said, Thaksin had told the King that he would only stay on as PM through the June celebration of the King's 60th year on the throne. By March 27, at a meeting with Surayud, Thaksin had revised his plan, saying that he would step aside immediately after the election.

4. (C) The Ambassador asked Surayud how he saw the political situation developing. Surayud expressed concern that several of the opposition leaders (especially Sondhi Limthongkul and Chamlong Srimuang) were not being rational in their approach. Sondhi in particular was still fixated on further undermining Thaksin. Surayud believed that the opposition should stop obstructing the process of seating the new Parliament. They should focus instead on getting to the next step, which is political and constitutional reform.

5. (C) The Ambassador asked about Thaksin's comment that the King did not like him (reftel). Surayud, weighing his words, said that the King had gotten wind of certain under-the-table transactions that had not pleased him.

6. (C) Comment: We believe that Surayud is a credible and knowledgeable source; this account reinforces our view that the King did not intervene to get Thaksin to step aside. Nonetheless, that story is likely to continue to circulate; many Thai will find royal intervention more believable than the idea of Thaksin's backing down, even temporarily. End Comment.
BOYCE